PUBLIC INFORMATION CLEARANCE RECORD

1. ORIGINATOR and PHONE EXTENSION	DATE:
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2. PRODUCT TITLE
Information Package – Meeting with City Council, Iola, Kansas Re: United Zinc #1 Superfund Site 8-14-07

3. PROPOSED USE
For distribution to the Iola Kansas City Council

4. CONCURRENCE: Sign-off and Date

OPA	SUPR	SUPR	SUPR	CNSL	OPA
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Signature in this block indicates the appropriate assistant administrator, regional administrator, head of staff office, or their delegate has reviewed and approved the material submitted to OEP or RGAD for signature.

G Drive: Product Masters File/Public Information Form
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Region 7

Iowa
Kansas
Missouri
Nebraska
Nine Tribal Nations

Fact Sheet

August 2007

EPA CLEANUP ACTIVITIES
UNITED ZINC #1 SUPERFUND SITE
IOLA, KANSAS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

EPA began a discussion with state and local officials in 2006 regarding lead contamination in the city of Iola, Kansas. The lead was a result of lead smelting operations at one of the southeast Kansas smelters called United Zinc. United Zinc was one of several zinc operations in the area. Historical records indicate that the site originally housed machinery and buildings for the lead smelting operations.

All onsite smelter facilities have been removed from the site, and the property has been graded and leveled. The site covers approximately 17 acres and includes ten separate parcels of land.

EPA began sampling properties in late April 2006 in the Iola community. Approximately 260 homes, day-care, schools, and commercial areas were screened. Properties were screened throughout the city to identify trends or potential pathways of contamination. Results showed elevated lead concentrations throughout the city, with higher concentrations prevailing in older neighborhoods.

Sixty-nine properties, or 27 percent of the properties tested exceeded EPA's action level of 400 parts per million (ppm) of lead contamination. Of the sixty nine properties exceeding 400 ppm, 32 of the properties had children occupying the residence. The highest lead concentrations were found south of Highway 54 and east of Kentucky Street, with concentrations greater than 1,000 ppm.

The primary contaminants of concern are lead and lead compounds. EPA conducted six surface soil samples from across the site in June 2006 to determine the degree and rate at which lead is absorbed into a living system. More specifically, an additional test was performed to define the relative strength of lead in surface soil.

EPA conducted cleanups on residential properties exceeding 800 ppm of lead. EPA took this action to reduce the potential risk of exposing children to the lead in the soil. This level is consistent with the guidance discussed in EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER) "Superfund Lead-Contaminated Residential Sites Handbook," dated August 2003.

EPA hosted two public meetings in April 2006 and September 2006 and updated the community on EPA activities. A fact sheet was developed to address the most Frequently Asked Questions about EPA activities at the site.

TIME-CRITICAL REMOVAL

EPA began removal of lead contaminated properties on August 15, 2006. The effort began at the McKinley and Jefferson Elementary Schools and one daycare facility. By August 19, 2006, both schools and the daycare facility were completed. Response actions performed in accordance with this action were prioritized as follows:

- Residential properties where the soil contains lead concentrations equal to or greater than 800 ppm.
- High child impact areas such as schools and daycare facilities with soil containing lead concentrations over 400 ppm.
- Residences where a child resides with a blood lead level greater than 10 ppm, and soil containing lead concentrations over 400 ppm.

CURRENT EPA STATUS

EPA has completed excavation of properties in Iola. On June 29, 2007 all equipment and personnel was demobilized from the site. There were 129 properties that met or exceeded the action criteria and excavated. Of the 129 properties, 20 were considered high child impact areas.

All properties with signed access agreements received from residents prior to June 22 were screened. EPA was able to excavate all properties that were screened and that met the removal action criteria. EPA screened approximately 1686 properties during the course of the cleanup. This number is primarily residential properties within the Iola community. There are approximately 700 residences that EPA was unable to contact either by knocking on the door, telephone attempts, and/or dropping off information packets at the property.

An additional cleanup action was conducted at McKinley Elementary School. On June 4, 2007, it was brought to the attention of EPA that the School District Maintenance Department had completed some soil disturbance work on the school grounds. Based on the original sampling effort in mid-April 2006, McKinley School was found to have lead levels exceeding 400 ppm, and was excavated in designated areas of the grounds on August 19, 2006.

During the months of April and June 2007, the school conducted work resulting in the spreading of lead-contaminated soils throughout the school playground. As a result, those areas were sampled and found to have soils exceeding 5500 ppm. EPA determined that a hazard was present warranting an emergency cleanup action. This separate action began on June 21 and was completed the following day June 22, 2007.

The total amount of soil excavated during the course of this cleanup was 20,159.08 tons.

PLANNED REMOVAL ACTIONS

EPA will continue to work with City Officials on the listing process to address the additional 400 plus properties that fell below the cleanup action criteria but exceed 400 ppm.

NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST (NPL)

When a Superfund site is discovered, cleanup can fall under two programs: removal or remedial. Removal actions address immediate threats to human health or the environment posed by contamination. Remedial actions address sites that require extensive and potentially long-term cleanup.

Under the Superfund program, a site may qualify for placement on the National Priorities List (NPL). The NPL is a list of hazardous waste sites that present the most serious threats to human health and the environment. Once a site is listed on the NPL, it is eligible to compete for cleanup funds from the Superfund Trust Fund. In order for a site to be included on the NPL, it has to score sufficiently on the Hazard Ranking System (HRS).

The HRS is a numerical scoring system used to determine the threat associated with actual or potential releases of hazardous substances at a superfund site. If the site scores 28.5 or above, it is **eligible** to be placed on the NPL. The primary intent of the HRS is to guide EPA in determining which sites warrant further investigation and cleanup. The HRS evaluates exposure pathways and the potential risk to human health and the environment. The pathways are ground water, soil, air and surface water.

Additional support from the city and state is needed for a site to be listed on the NPL. In the case of United Zinc #1, once EPA receives support from the City of Iola and the State of Kansas, EPA will be able to start a HRS package. In order for EPA to propose a site on the NPL, the Governor of the state where the site is located must support the listing.

When a site is proposed on the NPL, there is a 60-day comment period. During the 60-day comment period, the public may comment on the HRS package. Once EPA receives all the comments, EPA prepares a document to respond back to the comments presented. The site then is finalized on the NPL.

If you have questions or need additional information, contact:

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